

iniquitously transferred at your nativity into the hands of ignorant foster-parents, who had endeavoured to degrade and confine you to the sphere of regular employments and sober satisfactions. But, you would "tower up to the region of your sire." You saw what wonderful things might be found to be said on all subjects; you found it not so very difficult yourself to say *different* things from other people: and everything that was not *common* dulness, was therefore pointed,—everything that was not sense by any *vulgar* rule, was therefore sublime. You adopted a certain vastitude of phrase, mistaking extravagance of expression for greatness of thought. You set yourself to dogmatize on books, and the abilities of men, but especially on their prejudices; and perhaps to demolish, with the air of an exploit, some of the trite observations and maxims current in society. You awakened and surprised your imagination, by imposing on it a strange new tax of colours and metaphors; a tax reluctantly and uncouthly paid, but perhaps in some one instance so luckily, as to gain the applause of the gifted (if they were not merely eccentric) men, into whose company you had been elated by admittance. This was to you the proof and recognition of fraternity: and it has since been the chief question that has interested you with each acquaintance and in each company, whether they too could perceive what you were so happy to have discovered, yet so anxious that the acknowledgment of others should confirm. Your own persuasion, however, became as pertinacious as ivy climbing a wall. It was almost of course to attend to necessary pursuits with reluctant irregularity, though suffering by the consequences of neglecting them, and to feel indignant that *genius* should be reproached for the disregard of these ordinary duties and employments to which it ought never to have been subjected.

During a *projectors* story of life and misfortunes, you might regret that he should ever have heard of Harrison's time-piece,\* the perpetual motion, or the Greek fire.t

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\* John Harrison, celebrated as the inventor of the time-piece for ascertaining the longitude at sea, 1693-1776.

f Greek fire is a composition supposed to have been of nitre, sulphur,^ and naphtha as a leading ingredient, with which the Greeks of the Byzantine empire used to defend themselves against their Saracen foes.